

ADAMS, J.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO  
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

DENNIS SMITH,

Defendant.

) CASE NOS. 1:18CR370  
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)  
)  
)  
) Judge John R. Adams  
)  
) ORDER  
)

Pending before the Court are Defendant's motions for compassionate release and his motion for new counsel. Docs. 54, 56, and 70. Upon review, the motions are DENIED.

Within the COVID-19 backdrop, the Sixth Circuit explained this Court's duties and obligations when considering a motion for compassionate release as follows:

"In resolving those motions, district courts now face two questions: (1) whether extraordinary and compelling circumstances merit a sentence reduction; and (2) whether the applicable § 3553(a) factors warrant such a reduction. A third consideration, the § 1B1.13 policy statement, is no longer a requirement courts must address in ruling on defendant-filed motions." *Hampton*, 985 F.3d at 531. To that end, district courts need not confine themselves to evaluating "extraordinary and compelling reasons" as defined by the Sentencing Commission in the § 1B1.13 policy statement. *Elias*, 984 F.3d at 519.

*United States v. Montero*, 842 F. App'x 1007, 1008 (6th Cir. 2021). "A district court has 'full discretion' in determining whether an extraordinary and compelling reason justifies compassionate release." *Id.* at 1009.

For over two years now, courts have routinely found that the COVID-19 pandemic, when coupled with other health concerns, has constituted an extraordinary and compelling reason

justifying further consideration of a motion for compassionate release. At the same time, the Sixth Circuit has noted that a district court does not abuse its discretion when denying a motion when the prison facility at issue has no positive cases. *See United States v. Elias*, 984 F.3d 516, 521 (6th Cir. 2021) (finding that it was not an abuse of discretion to deny compassionate release when Alderson had no reported cases and therefore only presented a speculative risk to the movant).

The Court notes that Smith is currently housed at FCI Gilmer, a facility that currently has one positive case within its inmate population. Accordingly, Defendant's motion for compassionate release presents only a speculative risk.

The motions for compassionate release are DENIED.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

April 19, 2022  
Date

/s/John R. Adams  
JOHN R. ADAMS  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE